

REMARKS

Claims 14-18, 20, 22, 23 and 25-28 were previously pending in the application. By the Amendment, new claims 29 and 30 have been added, and claims 14-18, 20 and 22, 23 and 25-28 remain unchanged. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The claims stand rejected under the cited prior art of record. Specifically, Claims 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23 and 26 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Laurent (U.S. Patent No. 5,145,148). Additionally, Claims 14-18, 20, 23 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kolze et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,697,608) in view of Brehm et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,636,828). Claims 22 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Laurent in view of Grant et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,188,017), and over Kolze in view of Brehm and Grant. Claims 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23 and 26-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaselow (U.S. Patent No. 4,830,602) in view of Laurent, and claims 14-18, 20, 23 and 26-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaselow in view of Kolze and Brehm.

Independent Claims

Independent claim 14 of the present application recites a gas tap that includes a gas path and further includes an electromagnetic safety valve for closing the gas path. The safety valve includes an armature housing with a mobile magnetic anchor in the housing and a valve seat. The mobile magnetic anchor includes a valve closing element which presses on the valve seat to close the gas path. At least two magnetic anchor guide sections are positioned and axially spaced apart in the armature housing to guide the magnetic anchor, where the two magnetic anchor guide sections are made from different materials, a first one of the two magnetic anchor guide sections being made from metal and a second one of the two magnetic anchor guide sections being made from a plastic material. An electromagnetic coil activates the mobile magnetic anchor and the valve closing element to open the gas path when voltage is applied to the electromagnetic coil. Also, the

electromagnetic coil is arranged as a separate component outside of the armature housing on a magnetic insert.

Independent claim 26 recites a magnetic insert with the foregoing features as applicable. Independent claim 29 generally corresponds to claim 14 and additionally recites that at least one of the magnetic anchor guide sections directly guides the magnetic anchor, and independent claim 30 recites that the electromagnetic coil is mounted on an outer circumference of the first magnetic anchor guide section.

With reference to the Office Action, many of the rejections were maintained from the previous Office Action. The arguments from the Amendment filed September 18, 2009 are hereby reasserted by reference. The Examiner responds to the arguments from the September 18 Amendment on pages 2-4 of the Office Action. The Examiner argues that the sleeve 56 in Laurent serves as a guide member for the armature 20 because "sleeve 56 provides a close fit with the circular outer diameter of the wall of the through-bore 27 for allowing the wall to guide the axial reciprocation of the pin [38] as the solenoid is energized and de-energized." Guiding the pin 38, however, does not amount to guiding the armature 20, particularly since Laurent is silent with regard to whether the pin 38 is even connected to the armature 20 (in fact, in view of springs 32 and 36, it does not appear that these components are connected).

Moreover, claims 14 and 26 each require at least two magnetic anchor guide sections being made from different materials. This structure is also lacking in the Laurent patent. In the Office Action, the Examiner contends that Laurent discloses this subject matter, referring to sleeve 56 and "an outer portion of the armature 20 that contains axially extending slots 48." Sleeve 56, however, allegedly forms part of a magnetic anchor (see Office Action page 5, line 2), and it is not apparent to Applicants how this component in Laurent can serve as a guide to itself. The armature 20 also allegedly forms part of the magnetic anchor, and its outer portion including slots 48 is similarly incapable of guiding itself.

Applicants also disagree with the Examiner's conclusions relating to the obviousness of two anchor guide sections. As discussed previously, merely because a primary reference includes an anchor guide formed of a first material and a secondary

reference includes an anchor guide formed of a second material, it does not follow that it would have been obvious to modify either reference to include two magnetic anchor guide sections respectively made from different materials. In this context, the Examiner suggests that Applicants are attacking references individually. To the contrary, it is the combination proposed in the Office Action that is without basis. Neither Kolze nor Brehm would remotely lead those of ordinary skill in the art to include a second anchor guide without reference to Applicants' disclosure. Indeed, neither reference would benefit from a second anchor guide. The purported motivation "to ensure that the magnetic anchor is guided properly" is accomplished with the sole guides of each construction. Moreover, the motivation does not address the use of different materials. In view of these shortcomings, the results of the modifications proposed in the Office Action would not be predictable.

With regard to the dependent claims, Applicants submit that these claims are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter. The still additional cited references do not correct the deficiencies noted above with regard to the independent claims.

Withdrawal of the rejections is requested.

Claims 29 and 30 have been added. Claim 29 includes subject matter similar to independent claim 14 and recites that at least one of the magnetic anchor guide sections directly guides the magnetic anchor. In this context, despite that the sleeve 56 in Laurent does not serve as a guide member for the armature 20, new claim 29 more clearly distinguishes the structure of the invention by specifying that the magnetic anchor guide directly guides the magnetic anchor.

Independent claim 30 also includes subject matter similar to independent claim 14 and recites that the electromagnetic coil is mounted on an outer circumference of the first magnetic anchor guide section (i.e., the metal armature guide sleeve 39). In contrast, in Laurent, the solenoid 16 and coil 18 are disposed within an outer casing of the valve.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of Claims 14-18, 20, 22, 23 and 25-30 are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,

/James E. Howard/

James E. Howard

Registration No. 39,715

April 12, 2010

BSH Home Appliances Corporation
100 Bosch Blvd.
New Bern, NC 28562
Phone: 252-639-7644
Fax: 714-845-2807
james.howard@bshg.com